

Our daughter, Caitlin, completed her HSC last year at Wagga Wagga High School.

The particular course she wants to do is not available at our local university and so she decided to plan to study at the University of Wollongong.

In order to be able to do this she knew she would have to qualify for Independent Youth Allowance since the family income would be insufficient to meet the costs of her attending UoW. (The combined taxable income of our family is less than \$50000). To qualify for Youth Allowance she has been working three jobs to ensure she would meet the threshold amount.

The Budget announcements were a bitter blow. After committing herself to taking the year to earn money the rules have changed, without warning. Now her future studies are in jeopardy.

These rule changes are firstly extremely unfair to those students who completed their HSC in 2008 and chose to take a year off between school and university to ensure that they would have the financial capacity to study in 2010. For some it is a wasted year. For others, like Caitlin, it may mean she is unable to pursue her chosen course of study.

Secondly, these rule changes are unfair to regional and rural students, ensuring that university study is a far more difficult proposition than for their city counterparts. Yet again those who live in the city are advantaged over country kids.

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